

**ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides a glass packing tube for use in fabricating a microchannel plate. The glass tube has a plurality of flat inner surfaces and is used to form a boule including a plurality of optical fibers located in the tube and a plurality of support rods between the first optical fibers and the flat surfaces whereby the tube, fibers  
5 support rods between the first optical fibers and the flat surfaces whereby the tube, fibers and rods are fused together with reduced glass flow.